

SENATE BILL 2242

By Dixon

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 3, Part 7 and Title 49, Chapter 7, relative to enhancing economic and community development in Tennessee through collaboration between the state, historically Black colleges and universities, and private industry.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, is amended by adding thereto sections 2 through 6 of this act as a new, appropriately designated part.

SECTION 2. It is the intent and purpose of this act to promote and enhance the role of historically Black colleges and universities located in Tennessee as prime contributors to the economic growth of the state by encouraging such institutions to continue their efforts to organize a consortium for the purpose of strategically partnering with the state and private industry to effectively achieve superior economic development in Tennessee.

SECTION 3. As used in this act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Commission" means the Tennessee higher education commission.

(2) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the department of economic and community development.

(3) "Department" means the department of economic and community development.

(4) "HBCU" means and includes any historically Black college or university located in Tennessee, namely Fisk University, Knoxville College, Lane College, LeMoyne-Owen College, Meharry Medical College, and Tennessee State University.

(5) "Tennessee HBCU Consortium" or "consortium" means an organization or association comprised of two (2) or more HBCU institutions, the purpose of which is to facilitate and implement the strategic plans and objectives developed by and between the consortium and the Tennessee HBCU Technology Partnership.

(6) "Tennessee HBCU Technology Partnership" or "partnership" means an organization or association formed pursuant to the terms of a memorandum or cooperation by and among the department, the commission, the institutions participating in the consortium, and participating organizations from private industry, the purpose of which is to develop certain strategic plans and key objectives to leverage the collective resources of each partnership participant to achieve superior economic growth in Tennessee.

SECTION 4. In addition to the educational programs already provided for and funded by the state, financial support may also be provided for the organization, operation and continuation of the Tennessee HBCU Consortium. Funding for the consortium shall be in such amount as may be appropriated by the general assembly, and any such appropriation shall be expended for the equitable benefit of, or distributed by, the consortium in equal amounts to the HBCU institutions participating in the consortium to be used exclusively for meeting the key objectives of the consortium and the Tennessee HBCU Technology Partnership.

#### SECTION 5.

(a) The commission is authorized and directed to provide all necessary and appropriate guidance, assistance and support to facilitate strategy development and coordinated implementation by the consortium and the partnership to accomplish their respective and mutual key objectives.

(b) In furtherance of subsection (a), the commission may enter into one or more memorandums of cooperation with the consortium and the partnership on such terms as are deemed by the commission to be appropriate, mutually beneficial, and in the best interest of the consortium and the partnership.

SECTION 6. The provisions of this act shall not be construed to be an appropriation of funds and no funds shall be obligated or expended pursuant to this act unless such funds are specifically appropriated by the general appropriations act.

SECTION 7. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 3, Part 7, is amended by adding thereto the following as a new, appropriately designated section:

Section 4-3-7\_\_\_. (a) The department of economic and community development is authorized and directed to provide all necessary and appropriate administrative assistance, support, and guidance to facilitate strategy development and coordinated implementation by the Tennessee HBCU Consortium and the Tennessee HBCU Technology Partnership to accomplish their respective and mutual key objectives.

(b) In furtherance of subsection (a), the department may enter into one or more memorandums of cooperation with the consortium and the partnership on such terms as are deemed by the commissioner to be appropriate, mutually beneficial, and in the best interest of the consortium and the partnership.

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.